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ABSTRACT

Freshmen entering Indiana University in 1974 and leaving after two years but in good academic standing were surveyed in 1977. Those who were re-enrolled in an Indiana University System institution (57 students) were surveyed apart from the 303 students who had not re-enrolled. Academic and biographical information was gathered from school records. Respondents included 58 percent of the stopouts and 54 percent of the dropouts. Seventeen dropouts were eliminated for a variety of reasons. Results suggest that the voluntary withdrawals have individual characteristics required for goal and institutional commitment: ability and pre-college school experiences. Among those that withdrew there was strong indication that it was not a permanent withdrawal from higher education. Transfers tended to leave to find programs not offered at Indiana University. For stopouts and those discontinuing their education the problems encountered with the academic environment are more personal: dissatisfaction with the academic environment, absence of personal career goals, and financial problems. The end of the second year of college is seen as a crucial time, and it is concluded that retention programs focusing on academically capable students such as these will be more difficult to develop; they may not result in immediate retention but rather in increasing the likelihood that the student will return to the university in the future. Data tables with survey responses and compilations are appended. (MSE)

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An Examination of the Characteristics of Voluntary College Stopouts, Dropouts and Transfers

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An Examination of the Characteristics of Voluntary College Stopouts, Dropouts and Transfers

A 1950's nationwide study of two-year and four-year colleges found that forty percent of the entering freshmen never graduate (Iffert, 1957). This percentage remained constant during the 1960's and the early 1970's (Panos & Astin, 1968; Bayer et al., 1973). Thus, of the 7.6 million undergraduate students in 1971, over 2 million completely withdrew from this country's institutions of higher education (Pantages & Creedon, 1978). In view of these raw numbers and the projected decline in the college-age population in the 1980's, retention of students may become the name of the survival game for many academic institutions.

Students who leave higher education prior to completing a degree may be classified into two major categories: academic dismissals and voluntary (non-academic) withdrawals. Although the overall attrition rate has remained constant over the last two decades, a number of researchers have noted a changing pattern. There has been a decrease in the percentage of students dropping out because of academic failure and an increase in the percentage of students voluntarily withdrawing (Pervin 1956; Newman 1971). The National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972 (NCES) revealed that in the freshman year voluntary withdrawals exceeded academic dismissals by ratios of 2 to 1 in four-year colleges and 4 to 1 in two-year colleges.

The reasons for the voluntary exiting of the academically qualified students are not adequately understood. Cope & Hannah (1975) contend that ultimately it is the *fit* between the student and the college which determines persistence. They believe that the lower attrition rates at the prestigious private universities and the state-supported universities with national reputations are a function of greater self-selection by the students who attend these institutions and the correspondingly greater compatibility between the student and the institution.

Like Cope & Hannah, Tinto (1975) has attempted to explain voluntary withdrawal behavior. According to his theoretical model, persistence is dependent upon integration of the student into both the social and academic systems of the institution of higher education. Tinto suggests that an overemphasis on academic integration and/or inadequate integration into the social system can explain withdrawal behavior of academically-qualified students.

In the National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972, voluntary withdrawals from four-year colleges most often cited financial difficulties, marriage, and the desire to get practical experience as their reason for exiting. However, almost half of all the students surveyed indicated that their decision to leave a university was predicated on a reason not listed on the questionnaire.

The purpose of the present study was to ascertain the academic, social, personal, and financial factors that enter into the decision of voluntary withdrawals to terminate or interrupt their educational program. In addition, the study examined the students' employment and educational status during the academic semester subsequent to withdrawal.

Methodology

Subjects

The present study employed the term "voluntary withdrawals" to identify students who exited Indiana University before completing a baccalaureate degree and were academically qualified to continue their program of study (cumulative grade point of 1.90 or higher if they were freshmen and 2.00 or higher if they were upperclassmen). Of the 5052 freshmen who entered Indiana University's Bloomington campus in the fall of 1974, nine hundred thirty-seven (937) students were classified as voluntary withdrawals at the beginning of the third academic year. The largest percentage (N=360) of the voluntary withdrawals exited

the University at the end of their second year, Spring 1976. The present study selected to focus on this latter group of students.

At the beginning of the Spring semester of 1977, the University enrollment records were examined to determine if any of these students had re-enrolled in any of the Indiana University System institutions. On the basis of these records, the 360 students were divided into voluntary dropouts and stopouts: 303 dropouts had *not* enrolled in the University System during the calendar year (May 1976 through May 1977) and 57 stopouts had re-enrolled in an I.U. institution after an absence of seven months (May 1976 through December 1976).

Instruments

A survey questionnaire was constructed which consisted of attitudinal items and biographic items. Based on the responses to a pilot telephone survey and similar surveys, a list was generated of 32 items which the students considered in their decision to interrupt or discontinue their educational programs. Students evaluated the importance of items in their decision on a four-point Likert scale.

A biographic section of the questionnaire was designed to collect information about the students during the spring semester 1976, their educational and employment activities during the fall of 1976, and their future plans.

Procedures

Questionnaires were mailed with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey and soliciting the student's participation in the study. The letters were personally addressed and a stamped return envelope was included in each of the mailings. Three weeks after the initial mailings a follow-up mailing was sent to all nonrespondents.

Additional academic and biographic information on all 360 voluntary withdrawals was obtained from the University's records.

The biographic variables included sex, size of high school graduation class, date of admission to Indiana University, I.U. campus attended during Spring 1976, and academic major during Spring 1976.

The academic variables obtained from the University records were rank in high school graduation class, Scholastic Aptitude Test verbal score (SATV), Scholastic Aptitude Test mathematics score (SATM), first semester grade point average (Fall 1974 GPA), and cumulative grade point average at I.U. by the end of Spring 1976. An additional academic variable, relative rank in the high school graduation class, was computed for each student. Relative rank expresses a student's rank in his/her graduation class relative to the percentage of students who ranked higher.

Results

In the present study, 58 percent of the stopouts and 54 percent of the dropouts responded to the survey. Seventeen dropouts were eliminated from the analysis because they had completed a two year degree program, they did not provide usable data, or the original mailing was returned by the U. S. postal service.

The analysis of the data began with an examination of the differences between the two groups of voluntary withdrawals. One-way analyses of variance were employed to compare the two groups on seven academic variables. The information in Table 1 indicates that both stopouts and dropouts exhibited equivalent potential for collegiate success based on high school information and the Scholastic Aptitude Test scores. Indeed, the stopouts and dropouts achieved similar grades during their first semester and maintained nearly identical grade point averages on similar course loads during the two year period of enrollment.

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INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

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A chi square test was performed to determine whether there were differences in the representation of males and females in

the two groups. The ratio of males to females in the two groups of voluntary withdrawals were significantly different with males overrepresented among the stopouts and females overrepresented among the dropouts (X^2=5.38; df=1; $p \leq .05$). There were 33 males and 24 females among the stopouts; the dropouts were composed of 122 males and 181 females.

Survey Response Bias

To evaluate the degree of response bias, respondents and non-respondents were compared on the variables from the University's files. Table 1 presents the data that were used to evaluate response bias among the dropouts and among the stopouts. One-way analyses of variance were performed to determine differences between each group of respondents and nonrespondents.

Among the dropouts, the respondents and nonrespondents were significantly different on two of the seven variables. The respondents were ranked higher in their high school graduation classes (F=4.25; df=1,278; $p \leq .05$) and had obtained a higher cumulative grade point average during the first two years of enrollment (F=3.90; df=1,278; $p \leq .05$).

Among the stopouts there were no significant differences between those students who responded to the survey and those who did not respond. Thus, the survey results could be generalized to students who voluntarily withdrew at the end of two years of study with the limitation that the respondents to the dropout survey were generally the better academic students.

Stopouts vs Dropouts: Academic and Biographic Characteristics

The remaining analyses in this study dealt with only those students who responded to the survey. One-way analyses of variance were performed to determine the differences between the stopout and dropout respondents on the academic variables. Even though they were equal in aptitude and other measures of college achievement, the dropouts ranked significantly higher

in their graduation class than the stopouts ($F=4.15$; $df=1,173$; $p \leq .05$).

To determine the differences between the stopouts and dropouts in their responses to the biographic items on the survey questionnaire, chi-square tests were performed. Table 2 presents the percentages of females and males among the stopouts and the dropouts on the students' enrollment status during the spring of 1976, educational and employment status during the fall of 1976, and future plans to return to Indiana University.

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Both stopouts and dropouts were residents of Indiana, full-time students and sophomores on the Bloomington campus who had declared an academic major by the Spring 1976. Again, the percentages of males and females comprising the two groups were significantly different ($X^2=5.01$; $df=1$; $p \leq .05$); a substantially higher percentage of the stopouts were males while a higher percentage of the dropouts were females.

The stopouts and dropouts were significantly different in their educational status during the fall of 1976, the period in which these students had discontinued their educational programs at Indiana University. The dropouts were more likely to have enrolled at another institution than the stopouts ($X^2=6.71$; $df=1$; $p \leq .01$). Forty (40) percent of the dropouts had enrolled as full-time students at another four-year institution during the fall of 1976 as compared to only nine (9) percent of the stopouts. Among both groups a higher percentage of females were enrolled full-time in four-year institutions during Fall 1976.

Stopouts vs Dropouts vs Transfers: Attitudes in the Withdrawal Decision

Using the information on educational status, the voluntary withdrawals were divided into three groups; 1) dropouts from higher education (n=72), 2) stopouts from higher education (n=24), and 3) transfers to institutions outside the I.U. System (n=84).

Based on the survey responses, forty-seven (47) percent of the voluntary withdrawals who had completed two years at I.U., had transferred to other institutions of higher education.

The thirty-two attitudinal items included on the questionnaire were evaluated as to their importance in the students' decisions to voluntarily interrupt or discontinue their education. Table 3 provides the percentages of voluntary withdrawals selecting the four response categories for the 32 attitudinal items. A numerical scale of importance (0-3) was used to evaluate the item responses. Therefore, the median item response for the stopouts, the dropouts and the transfers was computed and reported in Table 3.

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INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

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Among the attitudinal items in Table 3, the dropouts indicated that the following items were the most important in their decision to exit the University: 1) unsure or undecided about career choice, 2) dissatisfied with personal achievement, and 3) lack of interest in program of study. The stopouts considered the following items to be most important in their decision to interrupt their educational program at I.U.: 1) unsure or undecided about career choice, 2) dissatisfied with personal achievement, 3) inadequate financial aid, and 4) accepted an opportunity for full-time employment. Finally, the transfers to other institutions of higher education considered the following items as most important in their decision to leave I.U.: 1) change in career plans to a program not provided by I.U. but available at another university, 2) inadequate academic advising, and 3) dissatisfied with teaching. It should be noted that the stopouts rated the items as more important in their withdrawal decisions than did the dropouts. On the other hand, the transfers indicated that their items were less important in their withdrawal decisions than the items cited by the other two groups.

Combining the responses of the three groups, it was found that 46 percent of the voluntary withdrawals indicated that being unsure or undecided about their career choice was important in the decision to withdraw from the University. Thirty-five (35) percent of the voluntary withdrawals considered dissatisfaction with their personal achievement to be important in the decision to withdraw.

Median tests were performed to determine the differences between the three groups of voluntary withdrawals on the attitudinal items. It was found that the stopouts and dropouts ranked nine items as significantly more important in their decision to exit the University than did the transfers:

1- unsure or undecided about career choice
2- opportunity for full-time employment
3- inadequate financial aid
4- ineligible for financial aid
5- dissatisfied with personal achievement
6- personal adjustment problems
7- change in family's financial support
8- change to noncollege vocation
9- lost financial aid

The transfers ranked only one item significantly higher than the stopouts and dropouts - "change to program not available at I.U."

An oblique factor analysis with squared multiple correlations entered for the diagonal elements of the correlation matrix was performed on the responses to the 32 attitudinal items. Four significant dimensions (scales) of the voluntary withdrawal decision emerged. Table 4 presents the correlations of these four dimensions. Each attitudinal item was assigned to a scale on the basis of the maximum factor loading (see Table 3).

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INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

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The first scale, "Academic Environment," accounted for 17.8 percent of the variability of the responses to the attitudinal items and had a reliability of 0.85* All of the seven

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*Cronbach alpha coefficient.

items associated with the first scale had substantial loadings (factor loadings $\geq$0.40). These items emphasized the classroom environment and aspects of the academic program at I.U. There was a sense of anonymity reflected in the items dealing with the size and impersonal nature of the instructional environment.

The second scale, "Financial," accounted for 9.7 percent of the variability in the responses to the attitudinal items and had a reliability of 0.70*. Four of the seven items associated with this scale had substantial loadings; each of these items reflected aspects of the withdrawal decision that were related to financial limitations of attending college.

Seven (6.6) percent of the variability in the responses was accounted for by the third scale, "Career Focus." Of the nine items loading on the third scale, four had substantial loadings; the reliability of the scale was 0.74.* The items on this scale reflected aspects of the withdrawal decision that related to the students' satisfaction with their academic programs or career choices and their degree of commitment to completing their programs and achieving their career goals.

On the fourth scale, "Social/Personal Environment," only one of the items had a substantial loading. This scale accounted for only 5.3 percent of the variability in the responses and had a reliability of 0.12. An examination of the ten items on this scale revealed aspects of the withdrawal decision that related to the social anonymity or personal considerations.

Employing four standardized scale scores, a two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to determine differences in the attitudes of voluntary withdrawals. Table 5 presents the results of the MANOVA.

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*Cronbach alpha coefficient.

There was no significant difference in males' and females' attitudes involved in their decisions to leave the University and there was no differential relationship between the sexes among the three groups of voluntary withdrawals. There was a significant difference in attitudes involved in the decisions of dropouts, stopouts, and transfers to leave the University.

Univariate analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were used as post hoc tests (see Table 6). Two of the four scales, Career Focus and Financial, reflected significant differences between the transfers, stopouts, and dropouts.

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The standardized scale means presented in Table 7 indicate that stopouts and dropouts considered an absence of a career focus as significantly more important in their decision than did the transfers. Finally, the dropouts and stopouts considered financial limitations significantly more important than did the transfers in their decision to exit the University.

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INSERT TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE

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Discussion

Tinto (1975) distinguished dropouts, stopouts, and transfers on the basis of institutional commitment and goal commitment. However, the present study suggests that the voluntary withdrawals possess the individual characteristics required for goal and institutional commitment, i.e., ability and pre-college schooling experiences. (A third variable, family background, was not investigated.) According to Tinto's model, therefore, it is the individual's experience in the collegiate environment that determines academic and social integration, and hence, persistence.

The student who enrolls at a university, academically succeeds according to the university's standards, and then elec-

tively withdraws before completing a degree has been an enigma for a long time. This study focused on the student who had proven academic abilities over a two year period of undergraduate study. Based on the information in this study and in a study of college persistence by Brigman and Jacobs (1979), several conclusions were drawn about the voluntary withdrawal. First, there was no difference in the academic capabilities (SATs and first semester GPAs) of the student who persisted and the student who elected to withdraw before the beginning of the third year. However, it appears that a lack of coherence between the student's academic needs and the academic environment offered at the university lead to a decline in performance and finally to the withdrawal of the capable student from the university.

Among the students that withdrew there were strong indications that it was not a permanent departure from higher education. Specifically, among those students who successfully completed two years of an academic program at Indiana University, a high percentage (47 percent) of the voluntary withdrawals immediately transferred to another institution. The role of the academic environment in the withdrawal decision of these qualified students was categorized as problems that relate to the general parameters of the academic environment (grading, teaching, class size, etc.) and as problems that relate to specific programs or the absence of specific programs. For the students who transferred the latter problems had a greater impact on their decision to withdraw; the students left in an effort to find programs that they believed were not offered at their original institution.

For the students who interrupted their education and later returned to the original institution, or those who discontinued their education, the problems with the academic environment were more personally related. The stopouts and dropouts were characterized as leaving the university because of dissatisfaction with the academic environment, the absence of personal career foci and the financial demands of attending college.

For the students who returned to the original university these factors appeared to be more important at the time of departure but apparently were more transient than for the students who did not return.

For many students the end of the second year of a college program may be viewed as a critical time of career commitment. The remaining collegiate program will be dictated by the students' selected majors. If there are any questions, uncertainty or indecisiveness about the choice of their major/career, the students must resolve them in order to continue effective progress in the academic/career continuum. The students who voluntarily withdrew after two years had selected majors (74%) but indicated that problems with their career foci had a significant impact on their decisions to stop out or drop out. Institutions need to continue programs that aid students in the selection of majors/careers. In addition, efforts should be directed toward providing the students who have selected a major the opportunity to reconsider/reevaluate their choices within the University's support systems, e.g., cooperative education programs, early practicums or internships in the major fields, and other more creative options that are directed at the potential voluntary withdrawals.

Summary

At the Bloomington campus of Indiana University it has been found that of ten freshmen who enrolled in the fall of 1974, three had exited from the University System by the beginning of their third academic year. The students who exited the University were classified as academic dropouts and voluntary withdrawals.

In a study by Brigman and Jacobs (1979), it was found that students who voluntarily withdrew before the beginning of their third academic year at I.U. could be characterized as being predominantly females with a disproportionately high representation

of out-of-state students. The voluntary withdrawals had applied and been admitted to the University a little later than their peers who had persisted. In addition, they tended not to provide Scholastic Aptitude Test scores on their admission records. At the time the students were admitted to the University, the voluntary withdrawals differed from their peers who persisted in two areas: they were from smaller high schools and were ranked lower in their high school graduation classes. During their first semester at I.U., the voluntary withdrawals' achievement was equal to their peers who persisted into the third year but by the time they exited the University their cumulative grades over the period of enrollment had dropped and were significantly lower than the persisters.

The present study elected to further examine the characteristics of the 360 voluntary withdrawals who discontinued their education after successfully completing two years of academic study at Indiana University. These students were initially divided into two groups based on the information available from the University records: 1) voluntary stopouts, students who had resumed their education in the University System after an absence of one major semester (Fall 1976), and 2) voluntary dropouts, students who had not resumed their academic program at any institution in the I.U. System after a one year period. Using the information from the University's student files, the 57 stopouts were compared to the 303 dropouts. It was found that males were overrepresented among the stopouts while females were overrepresented among the dropouts. The two groups of voluntary withdrawals were equivalent in their potential for college study based on their achievement records from high school and their scores on admission tests. They had achieved similar grades during their first semester at I.U. and had maintained similar grades over the two year period on equivalent course loads.

A survey was prepared and distributed to the 360 voluntary withdrawals. Fifty-five (55) percent of those surveyed returned

usable information. An assessment of the response bias found that the differences between the respondents and the nonrespondents on the characteristics examined were negligible with two exceptions: the dropouts who responded to the survey had higher achievement in their high school curriculum and higher achievement during the two years at I.U. than the nonresponding students. As a result of these differences, the dropout respondents differed from the stopout respondents in that they had achieved better grades in their high school years.

Based on the responses to the survey, forty-seven (47) percent of the voluntary withdrawals had transferred to another institution of higher education outside of the I.U. System. Voluntary withdrawals exiting at other points in their program may differ in their rates of transfer. With the information on transfers, the respondents to the survey could be reclassified as stopouts, dropouts or transfers on the basis of their educational status during their third year since matriculation at Indiana University.

The examination of the individual aspects of the decisions to exit the University among the voluntary withdrawals found that these students as a total group considered the uncertainty about their career choice and the dissatisfaction with personal achievement as dominant in the decision to exit the University. Transfers had indicated that their change to an academic program not available at I.U. and the dissatisfaction with the academic advising and teaching at I.U. were the more important aspects of their decision to exit the University. The strongest feelings about the individual aspects of the decision to exit the University were expressed by the stopouts; transfers indicated that with one exception (change of program) each of the aspects were of less importance in their decision.

The thirty-two reasons listed in the survey as aspects of the decision to exit the University were grouped into four scales that reflected the factors of the exiting decision. The factors were: 1) academic environment, 2) financial demands, 3) lack of

a career focus, and 4) social/personal environment. All three groups (dropouts, stopouts, and transfers) could be characterized as leaving the University primarily because of attitudes toward the academic environment. Finally, the study found that the stopouts and the dropouts differed from the students who transferred in that they felt that the lack of a career focus and the financial demands were more important in their decisions to exit.

Consumerism in higher education is a concept that is being widely discussed today. The product being bought is the academic training required to achieve entrance into a careers. Thus, when a student-consumer is not satisfied with the product being purchased, the student quits buying, i.e., withdraws. The student enrolled because of the academic programs and environment. It appears that the lack of satisfaction with the purchase is a major determinant of why the qualified student exits.

With institutions of higher education concerned about the retention of students, the voluntary withdrawals are a prime target group. However, programs to effectively increase the retention of these students are going to be more difficult to define than the programs which address the needs of the students who exit the university with more obvious academic deficiencies. The solutions for the problems of voluntary withdrawals are more subtle and complex. They may not result in immediate retention but in increasing the likelihood that the student will return to the university in the future. The challenge for the universities is great in this area of retention. However, programs developed for the voluntary withdrawals will increase the effectiveness of the university experience for all students who persist.

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Table 1
Descriptive Statistics on Seven Academic Measures for the Groups of Voluntary Withdrawals

Statistics	STOPOUTS Respondents	STOPOUTS Nonrespondents	STOPOUTS Total	DROPOUTS Respondents	DROPOUTS Nonrespondents	DROPOUTS Total
SIZE OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION CLASS						
Mean	456	417	440	390	401	396
Standard Deviation	303	254	283	(253)	263	258
Number of Students	33	22	55	142	138	280
RELATIVE RANK IN HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION CLASS[a]						
Mean	32	28	30	24	28	26
Standard Deviation	25	19	23	20	19	20
Number of Students	33	22	55	142	138	280
SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST - VERBAL						
Mean	482	487	484	474	476	475
Standard Deviation	106	110	107	95	103	99
Number of Students	33	22	55	137	131	268
SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST - MATHEMATICS						
Mean	514	501	509	507	495	501
Standard Deviation	83	112	95	102	97	100
Number of Students	33	22	55	137	131	268
FALL 1974 GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)						
Mean	2.95	2.90	2.93	2.96	2.86	2.92
Standard Deviation	0.82	0.62	0.74	0.52	0.58	0.55
Number of Students	33	24	57	147	139	286
CUMULATIVE HOURS OBTAINED AT I.U.						
Mean	55.4	53.4	54.6	54.3	53.0	53.7
Standard Deviation	7.1	10.5	8.7	8.6	10.5	9.5
Number of Students	33	24	57	147	139	286
CUMULATIVE GPA OBTAINED AT I.U.						
Mean	2.85	2.74	2.80	2.89	2.77	2.83
Standard Deviation	0.59	0.48	0.55	0.48	0.53	0.51
Number of students	33	24	57	147	139	286

[a]Relative rank is an IU admission measure which is obtained by dividing a student's rank in the high school graduation class by the size of the high school graduation class and multiplying the results by 100.

Table 2

Percentages of Stopouts and Dropouts on the Survey Biographic Items

BIOGRAPHIC MEASURES	STOPOUTS Males (N=19)	Females (N=14)	Total (N=35)	DROPOUTS Males (N=51)	Females (N=96)	Total (N=147)
			SPRING SEMESTER 1975-76			
Residence						
Indiana	83.3	64.3	75.0	69.4	76.0	73.8
Other	16.7	35.7	25.0	30.6	24.0	26.2
Enrollment						
Full-time	84.2	85.7	84.8	87.0	96.7	93.4
Part-time	15.8	14.3	15.2	13.0	3.3	6.6
Campus Attended						
Bloomington	100.0	86.7	94.1	94.0	91.6	92.4
Other IU Campus	0.0	13.4	5.9	6.0	8.4	7.6
Class Standing						
Sophomore	89.5	92.9	90.9	94.0	87.5	89.8
Other	10.5	7.1	9.1	6.0	12.5	10.2
Official Major						
Declared	84.2	92.9	87.9	66.0	72.6	70.4
Not declared	15.8	7.1	12.1	34.0	27.4	29.7
			FALL SEMESTER 1976-77			
Employment Status						
Full-time	77.8	71.4	75.0	56.5	40.2	45.7
Part-time	5.6	7.1	6.3	6.5	26.1	19.6
Other[a]	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.0	9.8	10.8
Not employed	16.7	21.4	18.8	23.9	23.9	23.9
Educational Status						
4-Year College						
Full-time	5.6	14.3	9.4	30.0	45.7	40.3
Part-time	16.7	7.1	12.5	8.0	4.3	5.6
2-Year College						
Full-time	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	6.4	5.6
Part-time	11.1	0.0	6.3	2.0	1.1	1.4
Employer training	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0	2.1	3.5
Not enrolled	66.7	78.6	71.9	50.0	40.4	43.6
First Semester at New Institution						
Fall 1976	21.1	14.3	18.2	35.3	41.6	39.4
Did not respond	79.0	85.7	81.8	64.7	58.4	60.6
Next Semester to Enroll at I.U.						
Fall 1977	73.7	64.3	69.7	5.9	11.5	9.7
1978 or later	10.6	0.0	6.0	11.7	4.0	6.8
Did not respond	15.8	35.7	24.2	82.4	84.5	83.5
Returning Campus[b]						
Bloomington	100.0	85.7	93.9	94.1	85.4	88.4
Other I.U. Campus	0.0	14.3	6.1	5.9	14.6	11.6

[a] Military, Housewife, etc.

[b] Percentages of the voluntary withdrawals who indicated that they planned to enroll at I.U. in the future.

Table 3

Percentages of Voluntary Withdrawals Selecting Each Alternative, Medians, and Factor Loadings of the Items on the Four Factors Involved in the Withdrawal Decision

	ITEMS	Percentage Response: Not a Factor 0	Slightly Important 1	Moderately Important 2	Very Important 3	Median: Dropouts	Stopouts	Transfers	Factor Loading
Factor I Academic Environment	Class size too large	75.0	9.4	8.3	7.2	.19	.07	.18	.88
	Classes too impersonal	68.3	13.9	10.6	7.2	.30	.21	.19	.87
	Dissatisfied with teaching	67.2	14.4	9.4	8.9	.28	.25	.21	.77
	Dissatisfied with grading policies	82.2	5.6	7.8	4.4	.16	.21	.05	.72
	Inadequate academic advisory services	62.8	15.6	10.6	11.1	.36	.21	.28	.57
	Lack of interesting or challenging programs	75.0	10.0	7.2	7.8	.24	.17	.12	.44
	Dissatisfied with educational facilities	80.6	8.9	3.3	7.2	.12	.07	.14	.44
Factor II Financial	Ineligible for financial aid	73.3	6.1	9.4	11.1	.32	.30	.08**	.96
	Inadequate financial aid	71.7	7.2	7.2	13.9	.30	.50	.08**	.76
	Change in family's ability to provide financial support	81.1	3.3	7.2	8.3	.19	.17	.04*	.57
	Lost financial aid	87.8	5.0	1.1	6.1	.14	.07	.02*	.51
	Cost of out-of-state tuition[a]	87.2	3.9	3.3	5.6	.04	.10	.09	
	Failed to be admitted to fraternity/sorority	98.9	0.0	0.6	0.6	.01	.00	.00	
	Preferred two-year college program which is not available at IU	97.2	0.0	2.2	0.6	.01	.00	.02	

Table 3 (Continued)

	ITEMS	Percentage Response: Not a Factor 0	Slightly Important 1	Moderately Important 2	Very Important 3	Median: Dropouts	Stopouts	Transfers	Factor Loading
Factor III Career Focus	Unsure or undecided about career choice	53.9	13.3	11.7	21.1	1.07	1.79	.18**	-.73
	Lack of interest in program of study	65.6	11.7	8.9	13.9	.38	.42	.16	-.69
	Dissatisfied with personal achievement in course work	64.4	12.8	9.4	13.3	.42	.50	.15*	-.68
	Personal adjustment problem	77.8	10.0	5.6	6.7	.22	.30	.06*	-.56
	Course load too heavy	87.8	8.9	1.7	1.7	.10	.13	.03	
	Accepted opportunity for full-time employment	72.2	3.3	8.9	15.6	.36	.50	.05**	
	Felt isolated	82.2	10.0	3.9	3.9	.16	.10	.08	
	Change in career plans to non-college vocation	85.6	5.6	5.0	3.9	.16	.10	.03*	
	Personal health problems	91.7	2.8	1.1	4.4	.04	.07	.04	

Table 3 (Continued)

	ITEMS	Percentage Response: Not a Factor 0	Slightly Important 1	Moderately Important 2	Very Important 3	Median: Dropouts	Stopouts	Transfers	Factor Loading
Factor IV Social/Personal Environment	Dormitory environment not conducive to studying	85.6	8.3	3.9	2.2	.10	.02	.09	.48
	Engagement or marriage	84.4	2.2	1.7	11.7	.17	.21	.04	
	Roommate or dormmate problems	87.8	6.1	3.9	2.2	.09	.13	.04	
	Dissatisfied with social life at IU	77.8	12.8	4.4	5.0	.14	.25	.12	
	Cost of out-of-state tuition[a]	87.2	3.9	3.3	5.6	.04	.10	.09	
	Family moved out-of-state	95.0	2.2	0.6	2.2	.03	.04	.02	
	Change in career plans to program not provided by IU but available at another university	75.6	3.3	5.0	16.1	.09	.09	.29*	
	Failure to be admitted to Upper Division program of choice	92.8	1.1	1.1	5.0	.03	.04	.14	
	Family health problems	91.7	4.4	2.8	1.1	.06	.04	.03	
	Commuting distance too great	90.0	3.3	4.4	2.2	.07	.04	.05	

NOTE: The factor analysis was performed using SPSS 'FACTOR' with type=PA2, notation=oblique, data=.2 and factors=4.

[a]Item loaded on two scales
*Significantly different at the .01 level
**Significantly different at the .001 level

Table 4

Correlations Among the Four Attitudinal Dimensions

Dimension	1	2	3	4
1	1.00			
2	-0.13	1.00		
3	-0.36	-0.07	1.00	
4	0.23	-0.03	-0.04	1.00

Table 5

Multivariate Analysis of Variance
on the Four Dimensions of the Withdrawal Decision

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom Hypothesis/Error	Approximate F	p
Groups	8 / 340	6.38	<.01
Sex	4 / 171	0.84	ns*
Groups by Sex	8 / 340	1.44	ns*

*Nonsignificant; probability greater than .01.

Table 6

Univariate Analyses of Variance
on the Four Dimensions of the Withdrawal Decision
of the Dropouts, Stopouts and Transfers

Source of Variation	Dimension	Mean Square	Univariate† F	p
Groups (Dropouts vs Stopouts vs Transfers)	Academic Environment	0.43	0.50	ns*
	Financial	5.91	6.62	<.01
	Career Focus	11.02	14.83	<.01
	Social Environment	0.76	1.22	ns*

†df=2/174
*Nonsignificant; probability greater than .01.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for the
Dropouts, Stopouts and Transfers on the
Two Significant Dimensions of the Withdrawal Decision

Descriptive Statistics	Dropouts (n=72)	Stopouts (n=24)	Transfers (n=84)
	Career Focus		
Mean	-0.25	-0.52	0.36
Standard Deviation	0.94	1.57	0.69
	Financial		
Mean	0.24	0.23	-0.27
Standard Deviation	1.04	1.16	0.77